2: Hutchinson E-4, 5 (1950-1951) 1957 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

VILA RECÔNCAVO

Politically, this influx of new workers has had little influence. Local politics, at least, remain in the hands of the traditional landowners. However, national political parties other than that of the landowners are gaining force, especially the labor party, and within the near future there will undoubtedly be considerable modification in the voting patterns. The bulk of the rural population do not have the franchise because of their illiteracy. On the other hand, the petroleum workers, whose level of living is considerably higher than that of the rural population, have the franchise and according to law must exercise it.

A major area of change in the community is the class structure. In its main outlines the class structure remains the same, but there are some differences in emphasis. Class A, the rural upper class, which also is part of the upper class in the capital city where it resides part of the year, has been somewhat depleted. The Coronel and his son and son-in-law and their families, who constituted the family owner-directors of Usina São Pedro, are no longer part of the scene. As a result of the shift in ownership and direction the former usineiro has been replaced by paid employees.[1] Although these employees are related to the principal members of the new owning firm by marriage, they are treated as employees rather than as family members. They do not have the "social standing," meaning tradition, background, extended family relations, and the scholarly training, which distinguish the former owners. Class A therefore is now represented only by the private plantation owners.

On the other hand, Class B is slowly becoming larger in both the rural and the urban areas of the community, as a result of the addition of two new groups: the members of the new factory organization, and the petroleum workers with their much higher standard of living, considerably higher education, and their steady employment as members of a new bureaucracy, Petrobrás. Unmarried workers belonging to Petrobrás are to some extent seeking marital alliances with girls of the area, especially from the factory nucleus and from the town of Vila Recôncavo. In some cases legal and religious marriages have taken place. In other cases the couple has simply

1. The term usineiro is usually limited to the owner-director who is the founder of the factory, or is the son of the founder. When the director is a paid employee, he is just "the boss."